DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 369 427 JC 940 229

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TITLE	Higher Education in the Northwest Territories: Different Systems, Different Perspectives.
INSTITUTION	Arctic Coll., Fort Smith (Northwest Territories). Thebacha Campus.
PUB DATE	Oct 93
NOTE	72p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; College Environment; *Distance Education; Educational Objectives; *Educational Policy; *Educational Practices; Environmental Scanning; Foreign Countries; General Education; Higher Education; *Institutional Characteristics; Organizational Climate; Sociocultural Patterns; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Northwest Territories

ABSTRACT

Postsecondary education in the Canadian Northwest Territories is currently the responsibility of a single, multicampus institution, Arctic College. The college serves a population of 58,000 people, representing 7 cultures and languages and living in 3 time zones, in a geographical area that comprises one-third the land mass of Canada. While universities in the "southern" provinces have long focused research on the Canadian Arctic and serve some residents of the Territories through distance or in-person education, Arctic College is the primary source of adult literacy education; trades training; and human services and business education, including employment enhancement skills training. Arctic College currently has headquarters in Yellowknife and six campuses. In response to recent political decisions, which will separate the Territories into two distinct political entities, Arctic College itself is separating into two distinct postsecondary institutions, with two headquarters, one in Iqaluit and one in Fort Smith, effective April 1994. The challenges to those responsible for higher education in the Territories requires serious creativity to enable the colleges to work within a complex framework of emerging self-determination, community-based services, changing governance, and finite economic resources. This report provides background information on the economy, demographics, and availability of higher education in the Northwest Territories, a brief discussion of organizations involved in research on the Northwest Territories, a history of Arctic College, and a discussion of future concerns. (Contains 70 references.) (Author/ECC)

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Higher Education in the Northwest Territories

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October, 1993

JC 940 229

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HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
DIFFERENT SYSTEMS: DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

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1993 March 26

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HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

DIFFERENT SYSTEMS: DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Until the late 1980's higher education opportunities in the Northwest Territories were certainly not "all of a piece".[1] An overview requires reference to a series of educational delivery sources which essentially have no common superstructure and which, in some ways, do not even touch each other substantively.

Picture a single College, which is referred to as a College or a College system, sometimes simultaneously. Add to the picture, a Federal delivery system, which both funds and, to some extent, directs the nature of the education/training content, and has, within the last few months, restructured to reflect the expressed need for ownership by the majority Aboriginal population. Then overlay a plethora of external University and College involvements, including distance delivery activities, articulation arrangements

and extensive national and international research. This will provide a glimpse of the complexities of post-school Education in the Territories.

There are many challenges to understanding this situation. One of the major factors is the current political, cultural, and social revolution, which has given immediate cause for review of all other structures within the Territories. The magnitude of this revolution must be considered within the context of the higher education "system" in the Northwest Territories. An accurate description of the pace of change occurring within the Territories cannot be fully documented. Perhaps a visual mini-series might better portray what is happening. Some of what has been written in this material has been changed from present to past tense within the space of a few weeks.

A TERRITORY AND ITS PEOPLE IN TRANSITION

A cursory environmental scan of the Northwest Territories demonstrates the challenges to any educational structure, which

functions within its parameters. The Northwest Territories consists of an area of 3,376,698 square kilometres, which is approximately one-third of the total land mass of Canada. With a population of 57,650, the population density is approximately 1 person to every 67 square kilometres.[2] Of the sixty-six communities in the Northwest Territories, the largest is the Capital, Yellowknife, with a population of 15,000.[3] There are four centres with populations of approximately 3000 and others have populations under 1500. Transportation is primarily by air. There is a partially-paved highway system in the southwest and the Dempster Highway from the Yukon to the Alberta Border serves Inuvik and some of the Mackenzie Delta communities. A water-based transportation system enables barges and ships to resupply coastal and Mackenzie River communities with fuel, equipment and other bulk supplies, including those required for household use, during the short summer season. Transportation is expensive, given the distances involved, and the vagaries of the weather.

In the Territories, which is about the size of the sub-continent of India, with three time zones, flights from larger centres to farthest distant communities may cost as much as $2500 return and a single hotel room may cost $150 per person per night. The total population of the Territories could fit into the Skydome to watch a baseball game and there would still be room left for others to attend.

Most communities have access to television and radio communications. Telephone service is also available in most centres, although a single telephone in the Band Office or radio phone may be the only communication link available. It wold be interesting to consider the impact of these demographics on one specific service, such as registration, which is taken for granted in a traditional Southern College. Given the need for ongoing communication with applicants, the challenge posed by geographic, transportation, and communication parameters are tremendous and costly to resolve.

Unique administrative questions must be addressed by higher education in the Northwest Territories. One example is whether to have Convocation early before the closing of the ice roads. These roads provide families with an economically viable way to celebrate with their graduands. This question precipitates discussions related to holding the ceremony before course work and practica are complete or maintaining the academically traditional model and, thereby, excluding many people from what may be the first graduation ceremony to be shared with their family. This one dilemma exemplifies the complexities, sensitivities and interrelationships of the cultural, economic, transportation, and political environments. It provides another dimension to add to the picture of higher education in the Northwest Territories.

The economy of the Territories is a major factor in considering the complexity of providing higher education services to residents. The largest private sector employer is the mining industry. The estimated value of mineral production in 1985 was six hundred million dollars which is 17% of the Canadian production produced in

a Territory with less than 1% of the population.

Government Services is also a very large employer in the Territories. According to Malone, "...in smaller communities, it is often the only business".[4] Not only is the Government of the Northwest Territories the primary employer, it is also the purveyor of the policies of both the Federal and Territorial governments as these relate to services and economic opportunities for the residents of the Northwest Territories. Government employment makes up about 46% of all wage employment in the Northwest Territories while in the rest of Canada it is approximately 21%. The Northwest Territories is the only jurisdiction in Canada where Aboriginal people comprise the majority of the population. It is estimated that 63% work in the wage economy at some point during a year, sometimes coinciding with opportunities provided by the service industry involved with tourism and, more particularly, construction. Both of these occupations are seasonal and some pay low wages. The Government of the Northwest Territories presently employs 2080 Aboriginal people or about 34% of the total of 6,123

employees. The percentage of managers, who are of Aboriginal origin, is 14%.[5] Malone states that "...the GNWT delivers services to Aboriginal people that the Federal government often supplies in southern Canada and that Northerners do not enjoy many of the subsidies which are part of the revenue from Federal services, including equalization payments.".[6] Of specific concern to those providing higher education opportunities to the residents of the Northwest Territories is the estimate, provided by Malone, that "...it costs three times more to provide services in the North.".[7] For those concerned with Full Time Equivalencies (FTE's), as a basis for the funding of institutions of higher education, this statement provides another example of the challenges faced by educational administrators in the Territories.

For some Native peoples, the traditional sources of revenue and supplies are still from hunting, trapping and fishing. Another increasing source of revenue is from the sale of Northern art, including carvings and prints. In a newsletter, published in March, 1993, there is an outline of the 1991-96 Canada-NWT Economic

Development Agreement (EDA). It reports that the annual sales of art production, including soapstone sculpture, fine prints, paintings, tapestries, beadwork, jewellery and moosehair tufting, to name a few, are approximately $28 million dollars. Interestingly, half of this income is reported as going directly to the artists, who then supplement their income with other jobs.

There are many factors to be understood in an attempt to clearly understand the opportunities and challenges facing the people of the Territories. A recent statement from the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women indicates that more than one out of every ten women in the Territories, ages fifteen to nineteen, has a baby each year. This means that, given any school year, and considering Grades 9 - 12, there will be forty-three babies born for every one hundred young women of high school age. Despite this fact, it is known that Aboriginal women are more likely to graduate from high school than are Aboriginal men. The birth rate among Aboriginal peoples is three times the National average and 45% of the population is under twenty.

A recent Labour Market survey, conducted by the Government of the Northwest Territories, indicates that based on the 1986 census, 33% of the adult population had less than a Grade 9 education and 56% had not completed high school. The same census reported that 17% of adult Canadians had less than a Grade 9 education and 44% had not completed high school.[8]

Recent figures available from Advanced Education in the Territories indicate that one hundred and thirty Aboriginal people have University degrees, with more than three thousand positions requiring degrees for entry. Other figures provided by Advanced Education indicate an increase in the Dene student Post-Secondary population of 535% between 1984 and 1992 and in the Inuit student population there has been an increase of 879% in the same time frame. The enrolment in Arctic College increased 272% in that time period.

There are other unique issues which have to be considered. If the fundamental skills of reading, writing, and mathematics add value

to the life of each individual, then the need for access to education is clear. In considering this, however, within the culture of the Territories, fundamental skills oftime have a very different meaning related partly to the on-the-land skills which have maintained life and continue to support life for some. The whole issue of clarifying "value", including the opportunities for enhancement of the economic position of individuals and their communities, is not as simple to define as it may be in other jurisdictions. Individuals must have the skills and opportunities to make decisions based on understanding their culture and the information age with which they must interact.

Malone refers to a territorial unemployment average, including the discouraged worker, of 26% with rates as high as 50% in smaller communities. The cycle begins early. Many Aboriginal children drop out of the education system before Grade 10. In a report prepared for the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, Northwest Territories Directorate, and the Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories, in March, 1992, the

Contents Section alone reflects the necessity to revisit the complexity of the factors which must be a part of any study of higher education services in the Northwest Territories. Topics include the socio-economic context, community attitudes about the expectations of education, attitudes in the home about education, students' household responsibilities and their employment, teaching styles and methods, self-esteem, and suicide, to name a few.[9] Of specific interest to the providers of higher education in the Northwest Territories is the finding in the Study that "school more often plays an influencing and/or guiding role in the future plans of Aboriginal students and most Grade 12 students plan to continue their education in the next year through Post-Secondary education, or by continuing in high school.".[10] This Report indicates approximately 58% of the population of the Northwest Territories is Aboriginal. This indigenous population, speaking seven distinct languages, makes up 72% of the school enrolment. Only 5% of the Aboriginal students who start school, however, graduate from Grade 12.[11] The Report indicates that 72% of the Aboriginal working age population in the Northwest Territories is functionally illiterate

and that among those unemployed, 67% have less than a Grade 9 education. Another startling fact, which speaks to the challenge of change in the Territories, is the fact that the Territories has the highest rate of suicide in Canada.[12] The challenge of providing services must also be seen in the context of related data which indicates that only 2% of Aboriginal persons in the Northwest Territories annually attend University.

The current system of Government in the Northwest Territories is in itself unique in Canada, effecting the process of planning and development of its institutions. There are twenty-four elected representatives, one for approximately 2,375 residents. The style of government is consensus, although motions are decided by majority vote.

In looking at the Northwest Territories in transition, of all of the factors which are currently driving change and effecting the life of every resident of the Territories, the proposed separation of the Northwest Territories into two distinct political, economic

and cultural entities is paramount. The Eastern territory is called Nunavut, while the Western Territory is yet to be named. Both Territories will have territorial governments, services and independent status in relationship with the Federal Government and other provincial Governments. The population of Nunavut would be approximately 19,000 and that of the Western Territories 38,000.

Of interest, as well, is the work of the Commission for Constitutional Development. This Commission is charged with the creation of a constitution for the new Western Territory. The work of the Commission involves responsibility to create a new relationship between the Dene and Metis and non-Aboriginal Northerners. This involves a definition of the jurisdiction; a statement of unique and shared experiences, values, interests and aspirations; the kinds of institutions which will make laws, decisions, and settle disputes; and the ways authority and responsibility are divided among these institutions. Embedded in these imperatives are matters of Aboriginal self-government; a new Constitution; and the devolution of Government of the Northwest

Territories offices, and their services, from large communities to smaller ones.

It is also critical to be sensitive to the very real issues of reclaiming cultures, identities, languages, and control, which is inherent in this climate. The elected Representatives, who currently hold seats in the Legislative Assembly, represent the Aboriginal peoples who live within the Territories, as well as the non-Natives, including a total of seven different cultural groups, speaking as many languages and more dialects. The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories works in more languages than does the United Nations. One signal of the interesting transitions which are occurring, is the change of community names from the obviously non-Aboriginal, to the original or alternate Aboriginal name. For example, the community of Snowdrift, with a population of 286, has changed its name to Lutsel K'e, sending a clear message to the institutions of the Territories to acknowledge the ownership and investment of its peoples in their land, their language, and their lifestyles.

AN OVERVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

It was not until 1982 that post-school education was described as being the responsibility of the yet unborn Arctic College, and was defined as education beyond Grade 10. Long before the establishment of its own College, the Northwest Territories had a number of educational relationships with "Southern" Universities, defined as Canadian Universities south of the 60th Parallel. These relationships provided research opportunities for southern-based students and research information for Northerners, although the latter function had occasionally been a source of some frustration for the hosts of such research. It is now a requirement to share the outcomes of research through licensing arrangements with the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories (SINT) which was created by the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly in 1984. Interestingly, the Canadian Circumpolar Institute (CCI) is located at the University of Alberta.

Another post-school (Post-Secondary) opportunity for Northern people continues to be attendance at southern institutions. Based

on information provided by Advanced Education, there were approximately 400 students from the Northwest Territories attending southern Post-Secondary institutions, in 1991-1992, of whom 100 were Inuit, Dene or Metis and the rest were non-Native.

From the perspective of an outsider looking into the Territories, it may be thought that a likely source of delivery of higher education would be distance education. While there is a long history of discrete projects, until very recently the majority of the registrants in courses delivered through distance education were registered with Southern Universities. While there is no accumulated data available covering all sources, one piece of information suggests a possible profile of utilization. In the period from Fall 1990 to Spring 1992, there were 298 registrants in Yellowknife enroled in university-transfer credit courses with Athabasca University. In the same time period, there were 32 registrants in Fort Smith. This suggests that most of the registrants are residents of the larger centres. This is likely due to the availability of the technology and also of the economic,

educational, cultural and language profile of students who register in University courses through access to distance delivery.

In 1992, Television Northern Canada (TVNC) was established and for the first time courses were offered through this network, potentially to all of the communities of the North. This delivery system is too new to provide specific data. Several other systems are being considered, including Distance Education By Radio (DEBRA), a radio-based delivery structure, currently anticipated for piloting by Arctic College in the Winter of 1993. While distance delivery seems to be one answer to serve the needs of distant and relatively small populations, the challenges for the technology and instructional methodologies are tremendous.

Other sources of educational information are to be found in a network of twenty-three Community Libraries which serves the North. The North also has an extensive number of newspapers and newsletters. These numbered approximately 170 in 1986.

RESEARCH

An adequate overview of the type and kind of research currently being done by Universities in and about the Northwest Territories is beyond the scope of this Chapter. In an Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies (ACUNS) Occasional Publication/Publications occassionelle, No. 8, 1983, thirty-four, Canadian Universities were identified as being involved in Northern research projects. In fact, in the ACUNS brochure, the mission of the Association is defined, in part, as being "to establish mechanisms through which resources can be allocated to member universities and colleges so as to increase knowledge of the North and ensure an appropriate supply of trained northern researchers, managers, and educators"[13] and "to enhance opportunities for northern people, particularly indigenous northerners, to become leaders and promoters of excellence in education and research matters important to the North".[14] Arctic College is one of two Colleges who are members of this organization and the College Headquarters in Yellowknife is identified as one of the Regional Offices of ACUNS. The second College which is a member is Yukon College.

In Education, Research, Information Systems, and the North, 1986, there is a partial listing of the staff specialists and graduate students engaged in Northern studies at the University of Alberta. Of the one hundred and twenty names and accompanying projects listed, the majority of those whose projects have geographical identifiers are related to the Northwest Territories. Two examples of the level of academic and public interest in the Territories are to be found in the current research related to the Franklin expedition the Wood Buffalo National Park, a portion of which lies within the boundary of the Territories.

Arctic College is also affiliated with The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories (SINT), Northern Information Network (NIN), Northern Scientific Training Program (NSTP) and the South Slave Research Institute (SSRT). There are also a number of American and International Post-Secondary institutions with which Arctic College has research/adjunct relationships, including the Hertzen Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia; the Michigan Community Colleges Consortium; and the University of Ohio.

THE ARCTIC COLLEGE STORY

Arctic College is the single higher education institution based in the Northwest Territories. It was founded in response to the economic skill training needs of the population. It has a colourful and well-documented history which, to some extent, parallels the development of the Institutes of Technology which evolved into Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology in Ontario, in the 1960's.

Arctic College, which is by law the institution of higher education, is neither a sole source, nor a sole focus for post-school education in the Northwest Territories. It strives diligently to work in partnership with a multi-sector client group, having many formal and informal channels which do not always functionally provide for clear governance of, structure for, or access to higher education. Unlike most provincial systems, where Colleges, both private and public, have some formal and publicly accepted relationship with each other, with prospective students, and with their funding agencies, the College "system" in the

Territories is not so clearly defined nor are the opportunities it provides for education and training always known.

In a letter written by Jack Witty, Director, Thebacha College, in November 1983, the origin of the College is described. Some quotations from this letter will help to bring the beginnings of this Institution into focus:

> ...a bit of extra money...and made a deal to buy the whole camp which consisted...of the cook trailer, power house trailer and...five sleeping trailers. The trailers were then pulled out of the bush and brought over to Fort Smith by DPW (Department of Public Works) crews during '66 (1966) and parked in the DPW compound. During the early part of the winter of 1967 a company in Ottawa, Snow Removal and Ice Control, approached Indian Affairs with the idea of putting on a heavy equipment training program in the north for northerners...become clear that we were missing an opportunity in that there was alot of training that really had to go on...[15] ...educational reserve, at the area where Thebacha College now is situated...permission was given in August of '69...land was cleared by the equipment/classes using bulldozers. There were no water or sewer connections so cess pits were dug,...scrounged two warehouse halves that had been abandoned by DPW and using heavy equipment again moved them onto the present site, set them up 50 feet apart and then with a couple of carpenter instructors began to put a floor between them and a roof over them and couple of more walls. By January we had closed the building in and had accommodations for the nursing assistance program, and upgrading program...[16]

Keep in mind that the average temperature in Fort Smith in January is -35 degrees Celsius! Oral histories describe barbed wire around the original trades training centre in Fort Smith, positioned to

discourage the visitation of local residents, whose presence distracted from the serious purpose which the trainees were expected to espouse.

One predecessor institution of Arctic College was the Adult Vocational Training Centre (AVTC) which was established in Fort Smith in 1969. AVTC was initially the new home of a program designed to train Heavy Equipment Operators to work in Northern Communities. This training had been given in Fox Hole, 20 miles west of Fort Smith, beginning in 1968. AVTC offered programs in Pre-Employment Welding, Carpentry, Clerk Typist, Certified Nursing Assistants, and CN Telecommunications. In 1971, the Centre received Canada Manpower (now Employment and Immigration Canada) sponsorship for its programs.

In 1977, the Head of AVTC became the Superintendent of Vocational Education, and the Centre became responsible for all vocational training in the Northwest Territories. At this time, Fort Smith was the Administrative Centre of the Territories. Given its

geographical location related to the expanse of the jurisdiction, the Centre faced enormous communication challenges.

AVTC and, later Arctic College, had all of the responsibilities of providing residence, recreation, counselling, and oftimes other services beyond the traditional role of higher education. The term, "in loco parentis", popular in the small University environment of the 1950's, continues, in many ways, to be part of the business of Arctic College.

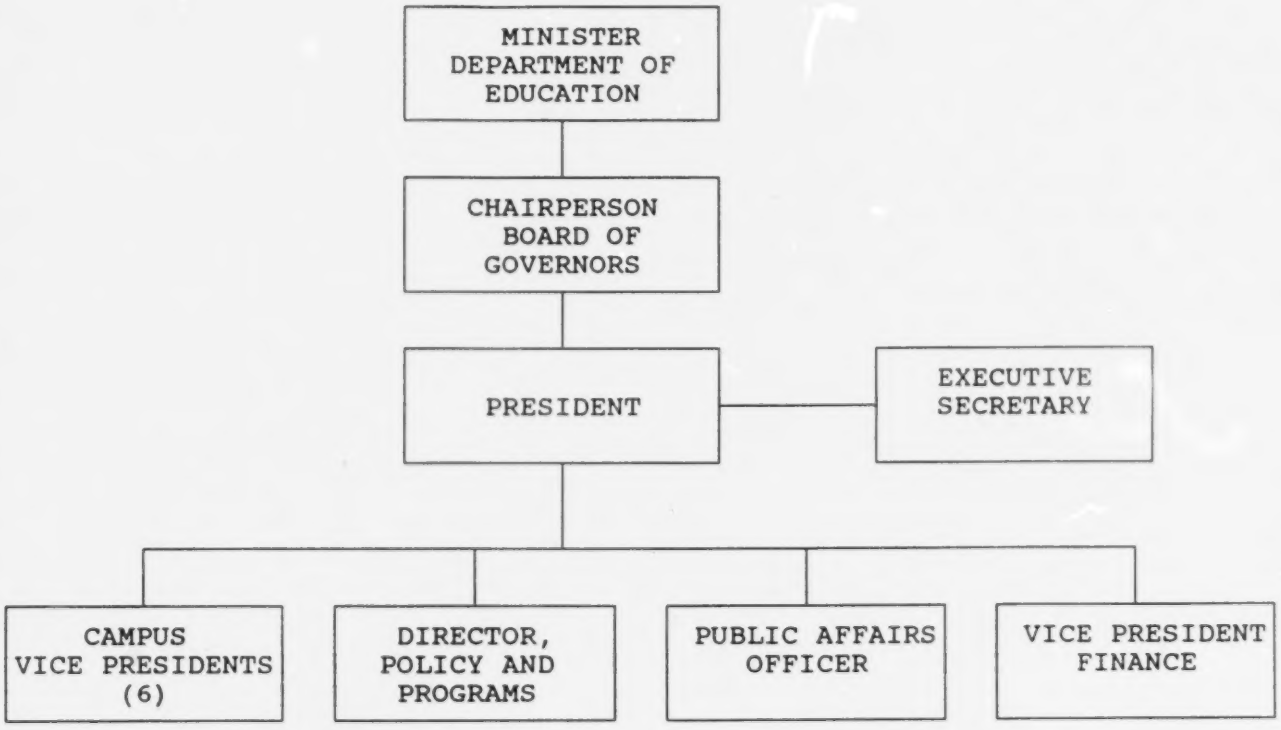
A Special Committee on Education was formed in the Northwest Territories in 1980. It was composed of five Members of the Legislative Assembly and its task was to "inquire into current problems and public concerns about education including reviewing existing legislation, consulting in all parts of the NWT, initiating action research projects to demonstrate new approaches to solving education problems, and charged to present a final report and recommendations to the Legislative Assembly in 1982.".[17]

One of the many recommendations made by the Committee was to establish Thebacha College. The first members of the Board of Governors were appointed in early 1982. The Board commissioned a Strategic Plan to guide the establishment of the new College and in 1984, the Executive Council of the Legislative Assembly approved a mandate for the College to deliver adult education and training programs throughout the Northwest Territories. Specific areas of program responsibility included: Technical and Vocational programs, compensatory or upgrading programs, adult and continuing education, general education and the initial years of university programs. To deliver education and training in a decentralized structure was a key element of the College's mandate. Other interesting recommendations were that students should be admitted solely on the basis that they demonstrate responsibility to profit from programs and that Arctic College be developed as a Community College concept. In 1986, the name was officially changed from Thebacha College, to Arctic College, a designation which reinforced the geographical mandate of the College to serve the population across all of the Northwest Territories.

In October, 1984, a Vice-President was appointed to direct the development of the Frobisher Bay Campus. In the mid-1980's, the name of the community of Frobisher Bay was changed to Iqaluit and, in keeping with the College's sensitivity to the culture and language of its students, the Campus was then called Nunatta, an Inuktitut word meaning "of this land". The organizational structure of Nunatta is essentially parallel to that of Thebacha Campus, in Fort Smith. Incidentally, Thebacha is a Chipewyan word meaning "by the rapids".

In 1986, the Arctic College Act was approved by the Legislative Assembly and the Board of Governors became responsible for the operation of the Corporation. The Headquarters of Arctic College moved from Fort Smith to Yellowknife. In 1987, the Aurora Campus in Inuvik was established and in 1988, two other Campuses, Keewatin, in Rankin Inlet, and Kitikmeot, in Cambridge Bay, were opened. In 1989, the Yellowknife Campus was opened by the Board of the College, intended essentially for Continuing Education students. In 1990, responsibility for the Western Arctic Adult

Education Centres was assigned to Arctic College. This responsibility has previously been managed by the Divisional Boards of Education. The Eastern Arctic Centres joined the College in 1987. The administrative structure of Arctic College, as of January, 1992, is shown below:



The administrative structure of each campus varies according to the size of the Campus, with two Campuses having both Deans and Directors, and others having a single Administrative position, the Vice President.

One of the major tasks taken on by the Board of Governors was to develop a Strategic Plan, with a Mission Statement and Goals. The Mission, designed to lead the College through the period 1990 to 1995 reads:

> Arctic College is a multi-campus institution designed to provide a wide variety of educational services to adult learners of the Northwest Territories. The programs are directed specifically to the Northern environment and the needs of individual northerners, the work force and the northern communities. The college recognizes the need to make appropriate educational opportunities available to any adult who wishes to learn. To accomplish this, courses and services are delivered at campuses and in communities across the N.W.T. In this manner, Arctic College strives to encourage life long learning in a rapidly changing world.[18]

Arctic College combines a centralized and decentralized delivery structure which is built on a foundation of twenty years of program experience and tradition. The College is currently engaged in establishing language and policies which will define its role as an institution of higher education. The struggle to address whether it is a College or a system of Colleges requires considerable expenditure of energy to ensure minimum replication of activities and partnerships. This less than precise definition of policies and procedures is a reflection of the relative youth of Arctic College.

The fundamental structure of Arctic College was changed in late 1992. The Legislative Assembly, which currently governs the Northwest Territories, directed the College to become two Colleges, one with Headquarters in Iqaluit and the other with Headquarters in Fort Smith. This transition is to be completed by Spring, 1994.

Also, the concept of system", as in Arctic College system, is often referred to in descriptions and discussions about the College whereas the language of the recommendations of the Special Committee of Education, which established the College, specifically refers to an "Arctic College". This contradictory use of terms to describe the structure of, and relationship within the College, presents another interesting management challenge.

Mark Cleveland, President of Arctic College, in Arctic College: The Development of a Territorial College System, identified a number of issues the College would have to either define or resolve within the next developmental stage, including Legislative establishment of base funding, definition of the College's mandate

and authority and approval for increased program offerings. One issue identified was the rate at which additional College Campuses would be approved and funded. Another issue involved the duplication of Certificate and Diploma programs and the resultant competition for funding. Also, from the initial recommendations which resulted in the formation of the College, there has been discussion concerning Extensions and Distance Delivery, which would enhance the ability of the College to meet its mandate. These initiatives would require designated financial resources to support the acquisition of expertise as well as the technical and physical resources implicit in the delivery of such activities.

The major concern identified by Cleveland was the need for Arctic College to "establish its credibility, in part through a conscious effort to establish its focus on its unique "community", and its inclusion of the strengths of the socio-cultural milieu in which it has been established.".[19] Arctic College is still struggling with these identity issues, a struggle which oftimes consumes Corporate energy which could be profitably turned back to its mandate to deliver education and training.

Included among the interesting source documents are the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories Hansard Office Reports. In the sittings held between January 31, 1980 and March 13, 1980, the Adult Vocational Technical Centre, the predecessor institution of Arctic College, was referred to approximately thirty-six times. In the February 12, 1986 to June, 26, 1986 session, Arctic College was referred to approximately twelve times. In a session of approximately the same duration in 1988, Arctic College was referred to approximately thirty-five times and in the February to July session, 1991 the College was referred to approximately fourteen times. The establishment of the Board of Governors and the incorporation of Arctic College was, in part, intended to place the College to an arm's length relationship with the Government. The above figures suggest this may not be as successful as originally intended. Arctic College continues to be a significant topic of reference in the Government of the Northwest Territories deliberations. A similar reference in another jurisdiction might provide some interesting comparative data.

One indicator of the challenge of credibility faced by Arctic College is found in the paper, Managerial Training in Nunasi Corporation.[20] The author is the Business Management Officer with the Nunasi Corporation which is the business arm of the Inuit Tapirisat Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, the group responsible for the 1992 plebiscite related to the definition of the boundary for the Nunavut Territory. He described a program to train managers for the Corporation. While he applauded the initiatives of the Government of the Northwest Territories and Arctic College to provide advanced education for the Inuit people, he indicated that the Corporation did not feel that it "was an acceptable position to vest all of the training requirements of the Inuit into established institutions of higher education.".[21] The task of defining economic partnerships and becoming an effective, responsive educator and trainer in this incredibly fast changing environment is not simple.

In a letter to the Campus Vice Presidents in March, 1992, on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of Arctic College, Cleveland

acknowledged the organization's experience "of change and rapid growth".[22] One specific structural move identified as critical to the future direction of the College was the consolidation of the Campuses and Community Adult Education programs. The intention of this reassignment was to link the College more closely to the communities and to centralize program delivery under a single organization which would coordinate delivery of "the academic and career preparation programs required to meet the needs of Northerners".[23] To provide benchmarks for measuring the success of the College structure after five years of operation, Cleveland identified (1) maintenance of permanent College staff in over 30 communities, with at least some services on an annual basis to more than 85% of all of the communities; (2) delivery of training worth more than $6,000,000 in partnership with private and public sector organizations in 1991/1992; (3) enrolment increases of 30% between 1989/1990 and 1990/1991. This rate of increase continued into the 1991/1992 year. Part time enrolments have also increased by similar percentages over the same time period.

One example of a community-based, partnership program was the Kw'atindee Bino Community Teacher Education Program, a project involving Arctic College, the Department of Education and the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education. This program provided for Teacher Education to be delivered in the community of residence to trainees whose first langauge is Dogrib and who will teach in that language. In 1990, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO recognized the project as an official activity of the World Decade for Cultural Development.

In 1991-1992, Arctic College had 1517 full time students and 6561 part time registrants. This is an increase of 19% over 1990-1991. It appears that there will continue to be similar increases in the enrolment in 1992-1993. Over the period 1988/89 through 1991/92, full time enrolment increased by 63%, with an increase of 28% in part time registrations in the same time period. Enrolment in Certificate and Diploma Programs has increased approximately 100% in this time period.[24] Of the students enroled in 1992, 58% were women and 42% men. Approximately 14% of the students bring their

children to the Campus where they are studying, if they are enroled in full-time programs. Approximately 75% of the students are of Aboriginal origin and they live in almost all of the 66 communities in the Territories. In snapshot data, compiled at Thebacha Campus, for example, during the period September 1992 to March 1993, students had come to the Campus from 58 communities in the Territories. This figure does not include a small number of students who come to Arctic College from outside of the Territories, mainly from the Yukon, Quebec, Labrador and Alberta. English is the first language of 65% of the students, with Inuktitut being the language of 8.5% and North Slavey and Dogrib of 2%.

Arctic College, although is has always responded to training needs identified by residents of the Territories, did not establish a Native Studies Program until 1990. This Program, which is offered in partnership with the Yellowknife Dene Band, Canada Employment and Immigration, and the Territories Department of Social Services is still without base funding. It has been most successful,

contributing to the sense of community and individual pride, as well as being the winner of the Association of Canadian Community College's 1992 Partnership Award. This identifies a critical issue facing Arctic College. It urgently needs to be identified with the culture of its many communities while establishing a clear identity as a Canadian Post-Secondary institution, maintaining appropriate academic standards and an administrative portfolio similar to other Canadian Colleges, to ensure that its graduates are prepared, if it be their choice, to move into mainstream southern education, to complete or obtain professional credentials, or to be further prepared to deal with the complexities of corporate management...all of this without any devaluation of traditional Northern values and cultures.

CONCLUSION

> Education is a dynamic process, involving individuals, groups and the society in which they live. It is a process which is shaped by the past, and, at the same time, one which must be refined continuously to support a vision of the future. The education process in the Northwest Territories should reflect the unique nature of this people's past...their traditions, history and values...[25]

"Dynamic" is the operative word to define the energy required by higher education services in the Northwest Territories to respond to the multitude of unique and changing factors effecting the daily lives and life-time learning opportunities of the residents of the Territories. To understand the present and potential role of higher education in the Territories, it is imperative to comprehend the large picture of the geography, the climate, the politics, the cultures and the economics of this environment. To manage higher education, in whatever new configurations will emerge, will require "serious creativity",[26] defined by DeBono as using skills to change concepts and perceptions. The traditional Canadian College model which is built on an optimum enrolment of X number of full-time students and Y number of part-time students, with a few international students added, all living within a defined and

comparatively small geographic space, with a relatively homogeneous expectation of the function of a higher education, is far removed from the configuration in the Territories. The sense of College as the "second-best"[27] does not seem to be an issue in this environment. What is at stake, and must remain of primary concern to those who are responsible for the funding and delivery of higher education, is the ability to respond to the priority need for literacy training for the residents of the Territories, which will lead not only to completion documents, but to a continuing process of educational opportunity for trades, professional or professional training. In turn, this process will provide educated and skilled indigenous practitioners as leaders for the new Northern Territories. In Canadian Community Colleges, Dennison and Gallagher spoke to the need for innovative delivery of higher education which differs from that expected of other Canadian Colleges. This requirement for innovative solutions is being tested even more in the environment of the 1990's than it was in the 1980's. No one solution, such as the increased availability of distance education opportunities, will provide all of the answers

or even the best ones. One source of positive action is to be found in the talents of the people currently involved with higher education in the Territories. Change of the nature and pace currently being experienced by those responsible for higher education in the Northwest Territories is both draining and exhilarating. It requires a commitment to renewal for its managers. In the document, Reshaping Northern Government, February, 1992, a number of recommendations for consolidating Government Departments were made which led to the Departments of Employment, Education and Culture consolidating in 1993-1994. The Mission of this Department is "to invest in and provide for the development of the people of the Northwest Territories, enabling them to reach their full potential, to lead fulfilled lives and to contribute to a strong and prosperous society".[28] Major legislated changes such as these must be accompanied by well-developed human resource plans if both the intent of the changes and the services to be provided are to remain vital.

One topic not referred to within the scope of this document is the

need to consider the impact of the global economy on the Territories and, therefore, on its higher education structure. Another challenge to be processed into a vision before much more time has passed is the role which the Territories see themselves playing in the global marketplace, a role which will partly determine the educational and training needs of its people. Porter, in his recent report, urges Canadian firms to "take a more pro-active approach if they want educational institutions to produce employees with both the general and specialized skills required for competitiveness.".[29] The Territories will have to determine and prepare for its place in the external market if it wishes to benefit from the opportunities which are available.

New perspectives face everyone in the Territories who has a stake in higher education professionally, politically, or economically, as well as those who are and will be the consumers of the services. New directions, both externally and internally prescribed, must be responded to with a firm, perceptive and creative wisdom which will bring into balance the struggle to blend the values of the

disrupted past and the vision of what should lie ahead for the people of the Territories.

As Canadians face changing perspectives in a multitude of situations and as the Northwest Territories come to a crossroads in terms of its governance, its economy, its languages of work and its educational structures, it would seem most appropriate to give the last word - a word of guidance - to a Chipewyan elder from Lutsel K'e:

> We all can't walk on one path, but we can all work together as a people for our children and the future.[30]

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Higher Education in the Northwest Territories

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October, 1993

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HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

BY

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Picture an area approximately one third of the total land mass of Canada or one which is similar in size to the sub-continent of India. Add to the picture, a population of approximately 58,000, enough people to fill the Skydome for a Jay's game. Consider a people in the Western and Eastern Arctic who live and work in three different time zones; where travel is oftimes by air, by seasonal roads, or directly across the land; where seven cultural groups speak as many languages; and where the elected governing body works in more languages than the United Nations. Add to this picture, a political environment now legislated to become two separate Territories, committed to a decentralized, self-governing, community-based structure for the delivery of services and education and you have a snapshot of the environment in which Post-Secondary education and training is delivered.

The high school completion rate for the Territories has been consistently reported at 20%, compared to a Canadian rate of 70%. This is the only jurisdiction in Canada where the majority of the population is Aboriginal making up approximately 60% of the total population and 72% of the total school enrolment. Yet, based on data provided by the Department of Education in 1989, only 5% of Aboriginal students who start school complete Grade 12. Of the working population, 72% is reported as having achieved Grade 9 or less. Social problems, including alcohol, drug and solvent abuse are known to be major deterrents to stability and productivity for people of all ages and the Territories has one of the highest rates of suicide in Canada.

Of the employees in the Territories, 46% currently work for the Government. This compares with approximately 21% in the rest of Canada. The birth rate is three times the National average and 45% of the population is under twenty. A statement, recently published by the Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, indicated that more than one out of every ten women, ages fifteen

to nineteen, has a baby each year. Based on the 1986 Census, 33% of the adult population has less than a Grade 9 education, while the National figure is 17%.

A formal, clearly identified post school educational delivery structure in the Territories has a relatively short history. Before and since the establishment of a College in the Territories, individuals pursued Post-Secondary education in institutions, referred to as "Southern", which are in jurisdictions below the 60th parallel. Also, there were and continue to be many research activities occurring about and in the Territories, under the aegis of "southern" Universities. In a compendium published by the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories in 1992, 600 research projects were reported as being active in 1991/92. This represents one research project for every 97 residents. There are also a number of adjunct educational activities, including Television Northern Canada (TVNC) which was established in 1992; a network of twenty-three community libraries, serving the sixty-six communities in the Territories; and some Distance Education

opportunities. It might be presumed that distance delivery of education should, or would, be a primary vehicle, given the demographics of the Territories. There is a long history of discrete projects but little formal data available to profile the registrants to provide definitive success indicators.

Arctic College is the single, indigenous, Post-Secondary institution serving people of the Northwest Territories. The predecessor institution of Arctic College was the Adult Vocational Training Centre (AVTC) which was established in Fort Smith in 1969. AVTC was initially the new home of a program which had been training Heavy Equipment Operators to work in Northern Communities, a program which continues to attract full enrolment. In 1977, AVTC became responsible for all vocational training in the Northwest Territories.

A Special Committee on Education was formed in the Territories in 1980 and, as a consequence of its recommendations, Thebacha College was established in 1982. In 1986, Thebacha College was renamed

Arctic College and in the ensuring time, a number of organizational and structural changes have occurred. The College currently has its Headquarters in Yellowknife, with campuses in Fort Smith, Yellowknife, Inuvik, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay. The mandate of the College was further enhanced in 1986 when the Eastern Arctic Adult Education Centres became the responsibility of Arctic College, and in 1990 when Western Arctic Adult Education Centres also joined the College.

The College has grown rapidly, with a full-time enrolment of 1517 and part-time enrolment of 6561, in 1991/92. Approximately 75% of the students are of Aboriginal origin and their homes are to be found in almost all of the 66 communities in the Territories. In snapshot data, compiled at Thebacha Campus (Fort Smith), during the period September 1992 to March 1993, it was identified that students had come to the Campus from 58 of these communities.

As this document was being written, another major structural shift in the Post-Secondary delivery system in the Territories occurring.

Effective April 1, 1994, it is intended that there will be two full-service Colleges in the Territories. One will have its Headquarters in Fort Smith, with campuses in the Western Arctic, including Fort Smith, Yellowknife and Inuvik. The other Headquarters will be in Iqaluit, with campuses in the Eastern Arctic, including Iqaluit, Rankin and Cambridge Bay. This structure reflects the political, economic and social separation of the Territories into two distinct entities, Nunuvat is the Eastern Territory, with a current population of approximately 19,000 and the as yet unnamed Western Territory, has a population of 39,000. This split occurred as the consequence of a referendum and its ratification which occurred in the Fall of 1992.

There are an increasing number of people attending and successfully completing post-school education in the human service sectors, including Social Work, Teacher Education, Alcohol and Drug Counselling; in the Trades and Technology areas, including Renewable Resources, Apprenticeships in Carpentry, Mechanics, Heavy Equipment, Electrical: in Business, including Office Administration

Procedures, Management Studies, Community Office Procedures and Tourism. One of the largest sectors of education which the College provides, Adult Basic Education, represents approximately one-third of the total College enrolment at any one time. One of the keys to the growth of the College population and the success of the students who complete Diploma, Certificate and training programs is the College's clear commitment to work with all of the partners in the education process.

There are been and will continue to be critical issues facing the College as it now exists and the two Colleges scheduled to be operational in mid-1994. The College has a critical need to be clearly identified with the culture and values of its many constituents and communities, while maintaining academic standards and an administrative portfolio with language and policies which allow its graduates to successfully prepare to pursue further professional education in southern Universities, should they choose to do so. The alternatives for the graduates require them to be prepared to work within the complexities of corporate management,

the diversity of the cultural groups determined to be self-governing, and the information age...all of this without devaluating Northern traditions.

To manage higher education in the new Territories, in whatever configurations emerge, will require "serious creativity".[1] It should be apparent that change, of the nature and pace currently being experienced by those responsible for higher education is both draining and exhilarating. As part of the political, cultural and economic transitions, another fundamental structural change has occurred, again through the process of legislation. The Departments of Employment, Education and Culture were consolidated in 1993/1994 and set out a Mission "to invest in and provide for the development of the people of the Northwest Territories, enabling them to reach their full potential, to lead fulfilled lives and to contribute to a strong and prosperous society".[2]

Given the demographics and the current environment, including the proposed devolution of the Territories into two discrete political

and economic jurisdictions, the challenges to effectiveness, stability and innovation in educational delivery are enormous. New perspectives face everyone in the Territories who has a stake in higher education professionally, politically, or economically, as well as those who are and will be the consumers of the services. New directions, both externally and internally prescribed, must be responded to with a firm, perceptive and creative wisdom which will bring into balance the struggle to blend the values of the disrupted past and the vision of what should lie ahead for the people of the Territories.

As Canadians face changing perspectives in a multitude of situations and as the Northwest Territories come to a crossroads in terms of its governance, its economy, its languages of work and its educational structures, it would seem most appropriate to give the last word - a word of guidance - to a Chipewyan elder from Lutsel K'e:

> We all can't walk on one path, but we can all work together as a people for our children and the future.[5]

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ABSTRACT

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

BY

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ARCTIC COLLEGE
FORT SMITH, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Post-Secondary education in the Northwest Territories is currently the responsibility of a single institution, Arctic College. It serves a population of 58,000 people who espouse seven cultures and languages, live in three times zones, in a geographical area which is one-third the size of Canada. While the Canadian Arctic has long been and remains a focus of research based in "southern" Universities and some of the residents of the Territories participate in Post-Secondary education in Post-Secondary institutions below the 60th Parallel, either in person or by distance delivery, Arctic College is the primary source of adult literacy education, trades training, human services and business education, including employment enhancement skill training.

Arctic College currently has Headquarters in Yellowknife and six campuses. In response to recent political decisions which will result in the Territories separating into two distinct political and economic entities, Nunavut in the East and a Western Territory, yet to be named, Arctic College is itself separating into two distinct Post-Secondary institutions, with two Headquarters, one in Iqaluit and one in Fort Smith, effective April, 1994.

The challenges to those responsible for higher education in the Territories require "serious creativity" to enable the Colleges to work within a complex framework of emerging self-determination, community-based services, changing governance and finite economic resources. The first word of the future should be heard from a Chipewyan elder from Lutsel K'e:

> We all can't walk on one path, but we can all work together as a people for our children and the future.

YATI NEDÚWELYÁ

ʔEDZA NÊN K'ÉYA ʔEREHTʼÍS KỤ́ NEDHÉ HAUNELTËN

T'Ą YERỊTʼÍS SÍI

GAIL M. HILYER
HAUNELTËN DËNE TTHE THEDA
ʔEREHTʼÍS KỤ́ NEDHÉ HÓʔĄ SÍI, THEBACHA HÚLYE
ʔEREHTʼÍS KỤ́ NEDHÉ, ARCTIC COLLEGE HÚLYE
TTHEBACHA, ʔEDZA NÊN

Dụ, ʔedza Nêh k'éya ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé haunelten sìi, ʔełáyỊi betʼą́s ʔet'e, ʔeyi sìi Arctic College et'e Harelyú t'á ʔedza Nêh kéya solǫ́nás-k'édỊ le mìi ʔanélt'e dëne huỊ ghą ełésdighé ʔełk'éch'a t'Ịné, beyatie ʔełk'éch'a hél-u; taghe ʔełk'éch'a t'á sa húlta-u, t'a nêh k'e náyídé sìi, Canada k'éya taghe ghą sie, ʔełághe ʔanélchá ʔet'e Kú, dụ tha ʔet'ìlu, yunaghé ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé ts'ę ʔedza Nêh ghą k'óhóreIighą xats'ên yeghą ʔerehtʼís dáltsi sie, hél tth'i-u nane ʔedza Nêh ts'ę dáỊ sìi ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé, nì húdzá ghárę k'étona hultá huyághe, haunelten xats'ên, nayi ʔeyere ʔerehtʼís kụ́ haunelten-u, nayi ʔerehtʼís bets'ên nìichuth t'á haunelten húl!; Arctic College t'a deʔánelt'e dëne haunelten ʔet'e, t'a haunelten sìi, ʔerehtʼís k'óhóreIighą xa ghą-u, dëne belá t'á ʔasie ʔeghádálaheida xasìi ghą-u, dëne ts'édi la ghą-u, ʔedexa ʔeghádálaheida xasìi ghą-u, hél tth'i nezụ ʔeghálada xasìi la behelts'Ị kúdé ghą tth'Ị.

Dụ Arctic College ts'ę tthe heréłtth'i sìi, Beghúldesche t'a hóʔą ts'ën, k'éta háyórỊla k'éya tth'i hóʔą ʔet'ìlu Húl!, ʔedza Nêh nádáret'á xa sni sìi t'á, náts'ên ʔedeghą k'araldé-u, ʔedexa tsamba hereltsi-u hat'á, tthỊzỊ Nunavut-u, názỊ, ʔału bezi háỊỊe húl!, hat'á, Arctic College, ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé, tth'i náts'ên nádáret'á hat'ìlu, náke tthe heréłtth'i hóʔą hat'u, ʔełághe Iqaluit hat'e-u, ʔełághe Tthebacha hat'e, Naydá Za k'e, 1994 kúdé.

T'ą ʔedza Nêh k'éya ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé xa tthe heréłtth'i dáỊỊ sìi, ʔake yeghą nídhen-u, t'at'á ʔake yeghą dáhálaheida h'at'á beghą nìitth'er ʔat'ìlu; t'at'á sìi, ʔedeghą k'araldé xats'ên ʔaghádálada-u, háyórỊla k'éya xa ʔeghádálada-u, t'ą k'araldé dáỊỊ sìi ʔeyìie ʔaini-u, ʔasle t'at'á tsamba hereltsi sìi dek'éʔu nìitth'iryìi t'á, ʔat'ìlu. T'ą tthe yati nìʔá nasìi, ʔỊłághe Dëne Sułine ʔałnedhé, łútsiik'é ts'ę beyatie hìichu wail.

> Harelyú ʔełáyìi tỊlu k'e ts'erIdìi xadúwé ʔǫt'e húl!, nuwes kenỊ xa-u, yunedhé xa-u, harelyú ʔỊłághe dëne łát'ú ʔała ʔeghádálayida xadúwéle.

T'ą yetaʼtì t'á yerỊtʼís sìi: Dora Unka
ʔerehtʼís betʼáchúth ỊìIe
ʔetałtì-u, yeretʼís-u haunelten ts'ę
ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé hóʔą sìi, Thebacha húlye
ʔerehtʼís kụ́ nedhé, Arctic College húlye
Naydá Za k'e, 1993

RÉSUMÉ

ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR AUX TERRITOIRES DU NORD-OUEST

PAR

GAIL M. HILYER
DIRECTRICE DES ÉTUDES
CAMPUS DE THEBACHA
COLLEGE DE L'ARCTIQUE
FORT SMITH, TERRITOIRES DU NORD-OUEST

Actuellement, dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest, le Collège de l'Arctique est la seule institution qui offre des programmes d'études postsecondaires. Il dessert une population de 58 000 personnes, population composée de sept cultures et langues différentes et répartie sur une région qui couvre trois fuseaux horaires et dont la superficie représente le tiers du Canada. Bien que l'Arctique canadien a longtemps été et demeure un sujet de recherches dans des universités du «sud», et que certains résidants des Territoires poursuivent des études dans des institutions post-secondaires situées au sud du 60e parallèle, soit sur place, soit par correspondance, le Collège de l'Arctique est la source principale de l'enseignement de l'alphabétisation aux adultes, de la formation professionnelle, de l'enseignement de services sociaux et des affaires, y compris la formation professionnelle dans le but de se perfectionner.

Le Collège de l'Arctique, dont l'administration centrale est présentement à Yellowknife, compte six campus. Suite aux récentes décisions politiques qui entraîneront la division des Territoires en deux entités politiques et économiques distinctes, soit le Nunavut, dans l'est, et un territoire de l'ouest, qui n'a pas encore de nom, le Collège de l'Arctique lui-même sera scindé en deux institutions postsecondaires, avec deux administrations centrales, une à Iqaluit et l'autre à Fort Smith, dès avril 1994.

Les défis qui se présentent aux responsables de l'enseignement supérieur dans les Territoires exigent un «esprit créateur sérieux» pour permettre aux Collèges de fonctionner au sein d'un cadre complexe d'autodétermination naissante, de services basés dans la communauté, de changement de gouvernement et de ressources

économiques limitées. Ces mots d'un aîné chipewyan de Lutsel K'e concernant l'avenir devraient servir de point de départ :

> Nous ne pouvons pas tous emprunter le même chemin, mais nous pouvons tous travailler ensemble en tant que peuple pour nos enfants et pour l'avenir.

BIOGRAPHY - GAIL M. HILYER

Gail has a B.A., McMaster, in Social Sciences and M.Ed., Adult Education, University of Toronto, an Ontario Teacher's Certificate and is in a long process of completing a doctorate in Education at University of Toronto.

Her previous major career commitment was to Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology (1968-1990), Welland, Ontario.

Gail also has twenty years experience as a consultant/evaluator of curriculum materials and textbooks for the Ontario Ministry of Education, and as a bias editor/consultant for a number of publishers.

In March, 1991, she joined the staff of Arctic College as Dean of Instruction, Thebacha Campus, with responsibility for Certificate and Diploma programs, including University transfer programs, delivered in Fort Smith and throughout the Western Arctic.

She has adult family and six grandchildren living in British Columbia.